



**United States Attorney's Office
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NEWS RELEASE

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Maryland man pleads guilty to misuse of a Social Security number

--man filed 13 bankruptcy petitions in eight years--

WASHINGTON - An Upper Marlboro, Maryland man, Gregory J. Prather, has pled guilty to misuse of a Social Security number, U.S. Attorney Ronald Machen Jr. and Shawn Henry Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office announced today.

Prather, 41, entered his guilty plea earlier today before U.S. District Judge Paul L. Friedman to the charge of Misuse of a Social Security Number. Sentencing is scheduled for May 21, 2010. Prather faces a possible sentence under the guidelines of four to ten months of incarceration.

According to the statement of offense, from February 2000 to January 2008, Gregory J. Prather filed for bankruptcy protection 13 times using either his own or other Social Security numbers in bankruptcy courts in Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia. Of the 13 bankruptcy petitions, all included false statements and all were signed by Prather under penalties of perjury. Prather used six different Social Security numbers on the 13 different petitions. On at least eleven of the petitions, Prather falsely declared under penalties of perjury that there were no prior bankruptcy cases within the previous six or eight years, when, in fact, there were multiple filings.

In 2004, Prather filed for bankruptcy in Washington, D.C. using a Social Security number which was not his own. In January 2005, the court denied Prather relief and dismissed the bankruptcy case with prejudice for three years. The following year, in 2006, Prather purchased two houses in Clinton, Maryland, using his own Social Security number. Within weeks, Prather was in arrears on his mortgage payments and filed a bankruptcy petition in September 2006. The Maryland court dismissed the 2006 bankruptcy petition; in addition, on January 8, 2007, the court terminated the automatic stay of foreclosure. Three weeks later, on February 1, 2007, Prather filed another bankruptcy petition, this time in the District of Columbia. Again he sought bankruptcy protection from the lenders by listing the two residences he purchased in 2006 on his

Schedules of Real Property. On March 14, 2007, the District of Columbia court dismissed the bankruptcy petition and filed an Order of Dismissal prohibiting the re-filing of any bankruptcy case for a period of five years. On January 23, 2008, Prather filed another bankruptcy petition, again in the District of Columbia, under a different Social Security number than used before, and again failing to list any of the prior twelve bankruptcy cases. Again, the court dismissed the bankruptcy petition, this time in February 2008.

In announcing the plea, U.S. Attorney Machen and FBI Assistant Director in Charge Henry commended the assigned FBI Special Agents, Paralegal Specialist Maggie McCabe, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Virginia Cheatham, who is prosecuting the case.

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